Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana for integrated development of identified craft clusters; Marketing Support Scheme; Design & Technology Upgradation Scheme; Handicraft Artisans Comprehensive Welfare Scheme; Research & Development and Human Resource Development. These schemes include components which provide for setting up of a variety of facilities and infrastructure as well as margin money support to assist craftsmen in gaining access to credit in addition to economic assistance under Credit Guarantee Scheme.

So far as Handloom Weavers are concerned, economic assistance is being provided for development of Handloom Sector through implementing various schemes which include; Integrated Handloom Development Scheme; Marketing and Export Promotion Scheme; Handloom Weavers Comprehensive Welfare Scheme; Mill Gate Price Scheme and Diversified Handloom Development Scheme.

Shortage of skilled labour in the developing industries

†*191. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of labour force is available in the country;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that in spite of that there is a shortage of skilled labourers in the developing industries; and

(c) whether Government would implement a time-bound action plan at national level by fixing a target for increasing the skilled labour force in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) Reliable estimates of labour force are obtained through quinquennial surveys on employment and unemployment conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). Last such quinquennial survey was conducted during 2004-05. As per two most recent surveys, labour force of the country on usual status basis which was of the order of 406.06 million in 1999-2000 has gone up to 469.94 million in 2004-05, registering an annual rate of growth of 2.97 per cent.

(b) and (c) 61st round of survey report on employment and unemployment during 2004-05 conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) has revealed that among persons of age 15-29 years, about 2 per cent reported to have received formal vocational training and another 8 per cent reported to have received non-formal vocational training. The Government has taken up the following new schemes for increasing the skilled labour force in the country:

(i) Upgradation of 500 Government Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)-100 with domestic funding and 400 with World Bank assistance.

(ii) Upgradation of the remaining 1396 Government ITIs through Public Private Partnership mode.

(iii) Establishment of new ITIs and strengthening of existing ITIs in the North Eastern States, Sikkim and J&K.

(iv) Imparting of short term modular employable skills under "Skill Development Initiative".

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

In addition, it has also been decided to set up a National Skill Development Mission under which 1500 new ITIs and 50,000 Skill Development Centres are planned in Public Private Partnership mode.

Requirement of aircrafts for the Navy

†*192. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of reconnaissance and 'Sea-Harrier' aircrafts has decreased continuously;

(b) if so, the number of aircrafts, engaged in the work of reconnaissance, destroyed so far including 'Sea-Harrier' aircrafts;

(c) whether requirement of reconnaissance and 'Sea-Harrier' aircrafts has become more relevant for Navy in the present context; and

(d) if so, the steps Government is taking to meet the requirement of reconnaissance and 'Sea-Harrier' aircrafts for the Navy?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Government constantly review the security environment and accordingly decide to induct appropriate equipment including aircraft for Navy for adequate defence preparedness. Reconnaissance aircraft are required for maritime surveillance. Sea Harrier aircraft are used for air defence of the fleet. The need for reconnaissance aircraft has increased in the present context. The number of reconnaissance and Sea Harrier aircraft in the Navy has decreased over the past years. However, this shortfall is being met by induction of additional Dornier aircraft, procurement of MiG-29K and Long Range Maritime Reconnaissance aircraft. Limited upgrade of Sea Harrier aircraft undertaken through M/s. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is expected to be completed by 2009.

Declaration of 2007 as year of water

†*193. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even after year 2007 being declared as year for water, there are several villages which are deprived of drinking water;

(b) if so, the details of such villages, State-wise; and

(c) the efforts Government is making to provide water in these villages?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Water is a State subject and State Governments are responsible to provide drinking water to the rural areas. To supplement the efforts of the State, financial assistance is provided to the States through Centrally sponsored, Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). The State Governments are competent to plan, sanction and implement rural water supply schemes from the funds provided under ARWSP. Under ARWSP, unit of coverage for providing drinking water supply is habitation and not village. Status of potable water availability in a village or habitation is dynamic in nature and is dependent on many factors *viz.* quantum of rainfall, operation and maintenance of existing systems, changes

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.